

Employee Suggestion No. 237

A. Information About the Suggester:

██████████, GS-12, Librarian, Reference Branch, Library Division, 25X1A9a  
Office of Collection and Dissemination

B. Summary of the Suggestion:

The suggester proposes the use of a Russian Transliteration procedure chart which he has designed so that untrained clerical and professional employees available throughout the Agency, especially in the Interim Assignment Branch, could be set to work extracting, in transliterated form, information contained in directories, indexes, and journals printed in Russian.

C. Evaluation:

The Assistant to Branch Chief, Soviet Branch, Office of Collection and Dissemination has supplied the Committee with the following evaluation:

"The attached recommendation is a unique method for the indoctrination of relatively low-grade personnel (non-professional ratings) in the intricacies of the Russian alphabet. There is no doubt in my mind that this system would work equally well with professional ratings to give them an "appreciation" knowledge of the Russian letters. This system has been tested on personnel at the Interim Assignment Branch, utilizing clerical ratings, and was found most satisfactory. Personnel without any knowledge of Russian were able to transliterate the 1951 Moscow Telephone Directory thus taking much work off the hands of professional cleared personnel in the Branch. The experiment which was attempted showed that what was to be a six months assignment was accomplished with the aid of the pool personnel, utilizing the suggested method, in a matter of some three months. It is not possible to estimate any financial saving, but it is possible to state categorically that the system is excellent and should be utilized for the purpose of giving unindoctrinated clerks as well as non-language personnel a sufficient appreciation for the Russian alphabet so as to permit their converting the Russian alphabet into the equivalent English transliterations.

"In view of the apparently continuing interest on the Soviet Union and the ever increasing emphasis being placed on the exploitation of Soviet language publications it is believed that much simple routine transliteration could be undertaken by unindoctrinated and non-professional clerical personnel after they have had the benefit of the proposed 'Russian Alphabet Recognition Chart'—if it is within my humble status to name this suggestion.

"I believe that the suggestion should be utilized and adopted for use. I am also of the opinion that its adoption and use would certainly result in considerable saving in the time of professional personnel."

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The Special Assistant to AD/ORR further supplied the Committee with the following information:

"The value which we attribute to the Employee Suggestion No. 237 is well illustrated by the importance which we assign to it in our textbook for the ORR Russian Familiarization Course, a copy of which is attached herewith...."

He further indicated that at present three to four hundred employees are now using the transliteration chart and that training courses in its use are given to OCD personnel. Courses have already been completed and it is planned to extend the training throughout OCD.

Several large projects concerned with IAB personnel in extracting information through the use of the Transliteration Chart are presently underway with a considerable saving of employee man-hours. Before the use of the suggester's chart, there were continual complaints from using sources in regard to overlooked items for translation, etc.

During the first week of November, representatives of the Office of Research and Reports consulted with the IAB for assignment of additional personnel to work on the transliteration project.

Information has been obtained from the Office of Current Intelligence indicating that that Office has very recently effected the use of the Russian Transliteration Chart for use by untrained personnel. They indicate that the use of this chart has been most beneficial to them.

D. Recommendation:

Suggestions of the aforementioned type are difficult to evaluate directly in terms of monetary benefits, although their intrinsic value may be of great worth to the Agency. Therefore, it is suggested that an award be considered by the Committee in keeping with the Scale of Awards for Suggestions With Intangible Benefits.

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Security Information

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